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Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 231164 TOSEC 140019

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 231164 TOSEC 140019

NODIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT ATHENS 7411, SENT SECSTATE SEPT 29:

QUOTE S E C R E T ATHENS 7411

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR GR TU
SUBJECT: MESSAGE TO THE SECRETARY FROM BITSIOS

REF: STATE 229795

1. FOLLOWING HIS RETURN FROM NEW YORK SATURDAY AFTERNOON, FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS CONSULTED WITH PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS CONCERNING SEVERAL POINTS THAT HAD COME UP IN BITSIOS' MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY SEPTEMBER 24 IN NEW YORK (REFTEL). BITSIOS SUBSEQUENTLY TELEPHONED ME OVER THE WEEKEND AND ASKED THAT I TRANSMIT A BRIEF ORAL MESSAGE TO THE SECRETARY FOR HIM.

2. BITSIOS SAID TO TELL THE SECRETARY THAT HE (BITSIOS)
SECRET

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PAGE 02 STATE 231164 TOSEC 140019

AND CARAMANLIS STILL DO NOT AGREE WITH THE LIFTING

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

OF THE TURKISH ARMS EMBARGO. HOWEVER, AS HE TOLD THE SECRETARY IN NEW YORK, THE GOG AND THE GREEK EMBASSY ARE BEHAVING "IMPECCABLY" AND NOT TRYING TO INFLUENCE THE OUTCOME IN ANY WAY. AT THE SAME TIME, IF THE EMBARGO IS LIFTED, BITSIOS SAID THAT HE AND CARAMANLIS FELT IT WAS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT A HIGH-LEVEL PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE MATTER BE MADE IN WASHINGTON. BITSIOS SAID THAT IN HIS VIEW THE STATEMENT SHOULD COVER TWO POINTS, NAMELY, THAT THE EMBARGO WAS BEING LIFTED BECAUSE OF VITAL STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS AND IN ORDER TO BREAK THE IMPASSE ON CYPRUS. BITSIOS SAID HE THOUGHT ANY SUCH STATEMENT SHOULD BE PHRASED SO THAT IT WOULD NOT ENCOURAGE THE TURKS IN THEIR INTRANSIGENCE WHILE, AT THE SAME TIME, IT DAMPENED THE NEGATIVE REACTION IN GREECE.

3. BITSIOS SAID THAT HE HAD ALSO PROMISED THE SECRETARY THAT HE WOULD DISCUSS WITH CARAMANLIS THE POSSIBILITY OF A US TEAM VISITING ATHENS TO DISCUSS GREEK ECONOMIC AND MILITARY NEEDS, AND TO LET THE SECRETARY KNOW CARAMANLIS' REACTION. BITSIOS SAID TO TELL THE SECRETARY THAT CARAMANLIS DOES NOT WANT TO HURRY IN DECIDING ON THIS POINT AND THAT HE (BITSIOS) WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH THE SECRETARY FURTHER ABOUT IT LATER ON.

4. BITSIOS SAID THAT HE SAW TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTER CAGLAYANGIL TWICE WHILE THEY WERE BOTH IN NEW YORK. HE SAID THAT HE STILL CONSIDERED CAGLAYANGIL TO BE A "GOOD MAN" BUT THAT THE LATTER WAS MUCH MORE LIMITED NOW IN WHAT HE COULD SAY AND DO THAN HE WAS IN THEIR EARLIER MEETINGS IN ROME AND BRUSSELS. BITSIOS SAID THAT CAGLAYANGIL EVADED MANY OF BITSIOS' QUESTIONS AND SEEMED TO BE STALLING FOR TIME - PROBABLY UNTIL AFTER THE OCTOBER 12 ELECTIONS. AS FAR AS THE JOINT GREEK-TURKISH MEETING ON THE AEGEAN CONTINENTAL SHELF, BITSIOS SAID HE WAS WORKING WITH CAGLAYANGIL IN AN EFFORT TO RESCHEDULE THAT MEETING.

5. BITSIOS SAID HE WAS LEAVING TODAY FOR
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ROME - FOR CARAMANLIS' OFFICIAL VISIT - AND WOULD BE BACK LATE WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, IN CASE I NEEDED TO SEE HIM THURSDAY OR FRIDAY OF THIS WEEK.

6. COMMENT. BITSIOS DID NOT GIVE ME THE SLIGHTEST INDICATION THAT HE WAS AWARE OF MY LONG, PRIVATE MEETING WITH CARAMANLIS LAST FRIDAY NIGHT. THEREFORE, I SAID NOTHING TO HIM ABOUT THE

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

MEETING, BELIEVING THAT IT WAS UP TO CARAMANLIS
AND NOT ME TO TELL BITSIOS ABOUT IT IF HE WISHED
TO DO SO. I KNOW OF NO REASON WHY CARMANLIS
SHOULD NOT MENTION OUR MEETING TO BPTSIOS AT SOME
POPNT, BUT FOR THE TIME BEING WE SHOULD NOT REFER
TO IT IN ANY MESSAGES TO BITSIOS. KUBISCH UNQUOTE.
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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EO Systematic Review
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